

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 TRSE-00 DODE-00
OIC-02 USIE-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /055 W
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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 859
INFO USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 08276

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO OCON AWACS MILI FR
SUBJECT: NATO AEW: US POSITION AT SPECIAL MINISTERIAL

REF: STATE 061945 (DTG 192110Z MAR 77)

1. SUMMARY: EMBOFF INFORMED FRENCH MOD OF US POSITION
CONTAINED REFTEL. MOD CONTACT DOUBTED THAT GOF WOULD BE
ABLE TO TAKE DEFINITIVE DECISION ON FRENCH AWACS
PARTICIPATION BY MARCH 25 SPECIAL MINISTERIAL. CONTACT
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CONTINUED THAT MOD IS SORELY TROUBLED BY COSTS OF FRENCH
PARTICIPATION WHICH WAS CALCULATED ON MARCH 18 DURING
VISIT BY NAPO STAFF MEMBERS AT \$415 MILLION. END
SUMMARY.

2. ON MARCH 21 EMBOFF CONVEYED SUBSTANCE REFTEL TO
BUYENET, DEPUTY TO DIPLOMATIC ADVISER TO THE MINISTER OF

DEFENSE (HIBON, THE DIPLOMATIC ADVISER, IS ABSENT FROM PARIS).

3. BUYENET, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, SAID US POSITION APPEARS TO LEAVE DOOR OPEN FOR FRENCH PARTICIPATION BEYOND THIS FRIDAY'S SPECIAL MINISTERIAL. FRENCH VERY MUCH NEED TIME TO ANALYZE COSTS OF VARIOUS OPTIONS. BUYENET DOUBTED THAT GOF WOULD BE ABLE TO REACH FINAL DECISION PRIOR TO MARCH 25.

4. BUYENET SAID NAPO TEAM VISITED PARIS MARCH 18 AND PUT FOLLOWING "LATEST" FIGURES TO GOF:
-- TOTAL AWACS PROGRAM COST: \$2.46 BILLION;
-- GOF SHARE: \$415 MILLION (\$240 MILLION AS FRENCH PERCENTAGE SHARE PLUS \$175 MILLION TO COVER ADDED COST OF GE/SNECMA CFM-56 ENGINE).

BUYENET SAID THAT MOD STUDIES INDICATE THAT FRANCE WILL REALIZE ONLY \$100 MILLION RETURN IF NATO AWACS FLEET IS EQUIPPED WITH CFM-56. THUS THE GOF SHARE AS OUTLINED BY NAPO WILL BE DIFFICULT TO SWALLOW AS IT REPRESENTS SIX MONTHS OF ENTIRE FRENCH AIR FORCE INVESTMENT BUDGET, OR 20 TO 50 COMBAT AIRCRAFT DEPENDING ON THE TYPE PURCHASED.

5. BUYENET CONTINUED THAT GOF IS TAKING HARD LOOK AT COSTS OF TWO OPTIONS:

A. SUBSCRIPTION TO AWACS AFTER SYSTEM REACHES IOC. THIS DEFERS BUDGET OUTLAYS.
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B. DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN AWACS PROCUREMENT WITH PURCHASE OF 3 OR 4 AIRCRAFT TO BE STATIONED IN FRANCE UNDER FRENCH AIR FORCE AND "COORDINATED" (A EUPHEMISM FOR INTEGRATED) INTO NATO-WIDE SYSTEM. BUYENET NOTED THAT UNDER THIS OPTION GOF WOULD INCUR ADDITIONAL COSTS RESULTING FROM NEED FOR AT LEAST PARTIAL LOGISTICS SUPPORT DUE TO BASING IN FRANCE.

6. BUYENET ADDED THAT AN ALTERNATIVE TO AWACS PARTICIPATION IS FOR GOF TO SET ASIDE \$100 MILLION, BUY 100 CFM-56 ENGINES AND STORE THEM FOR SUBSEQUENT CIVILIAN EXPORT SALES. HE IMPLIED THAT THIS OPTION WAS NOT A VERY LIKELY OUTCOME.

7. IN CONCLUSION, BUYENET REITERATED THAT GOF NEEDS TIME TO COST FULLY ITS FINAL DECISION AND WORK OUT DETAILS OF POSSIBLE GOF PARTICIPATION.
GAMMON

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